

Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 031205Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3380

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 3007

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, IS, RO

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF EMIGRATION SITUATION TO ISRAEL

REF: (A) BUCHAREST 2915, (B) BUCHAREST 2868, (C) BUCHAREST
2817, (D) BUCHAREST 2765, (E) BUCHAREST 2762,
(F) BUCHAREST 2749, (G) STATE 154732

1. SUMMARY. WE HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT NEW INFORMATION TO ADD
TO REFTEL REPORTING ON SUBJECT OF EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL.
SURGE IN APPROVALS IN PAST SEVERAL WEEKS COMBINED WITH SHARP
UPSWING IN ACTUAL DEPARTURES IN JUNE (303 PERSONS) SEEM TO
US CLEAR SIGNAL OF GOR INTENTIONS. MAJOR UNANSWERED QUES-
TION IS JUST HOW LARGE IS JEWISH COMMUNITY REMAINING HERE
WHICH DESIRES TO EMIGRATE RIGHT NOW OR IN NEAR FUTURE TO
ISRAEL. NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW THE ANSWER.

2. IN A REVIEW OF SITUATION TODAY WITH ISRAELI AMBASSADOR
COHEN HE INFORMED US THERE WERE 505 DEPARTURES TO ISRAEL
DURING PERIOD 1 JAN - 30 JUNE 1975. IN MONTH OF JUNE ALONE
303 DEPARTURES TOOK PLACE, 202 OF THESE DEPARTURES REGIS-
TERED DURING LAST TWO WEEKS OF THE MONTH. HE NOTED THAT JUNE
FIGURES REPRESENTS PORTION OF APPROVALS GRANTED IN MONTHS OF
APRIL AND MAY. (FYI: DISCREPANCY BETWEEN FIGURE OF 542 DE-
PARTURES PROVIDED US BY RABBI ROSEN (PARA 4 (B) REF A) AND
GOI EMBASSY FIGURE OF 505 IS ACCOUNTED FOR BY DIVERSIONS TO
COUNTRIES OTHER THAN ISRAEL AFTER EMIGRANTS HAVE DEPARTED
ROMANIA, ACCORDING TO AMB COHEN.)

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3. AMB COHEN ALSO REPORTED THAT 640 APPROVALS WERE RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE. ALTHOUGH HE CLAIMS NO CERTAIN WAY OF KNOWING, HE IS PROJECTING A JULY DEPARTURE FIGURE OF APPROXIMATELY 300 PERSONS.

4. AMB COHEN IS SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL OF RABBI ROSEN'S CENSUS EFFORT (REFS A, B, E, F). HE NOTED THAT EVEN THOUGH HE WAS CERTAIN WORD WOULD BY NOW HAVE SPREAD THROUGHOUT ROMANIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY, HE DID NOT THINK ANY SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE WOULD RESPOND. REASONS WERE THAT (A) BULK OF REMAINING POTENTIAL EMIGRANTS WERE EITHER VERY OLD OR QUITE YOUNG. ON THE WHOLE THE OLD WERE BEING WELL CARED FOR, AND ALTHOUGH THE YOUNG WISHED PRESERVE THEIR OPTIONS, FOR THE TIME BEING THEY ARE PREPARED TO GET A FREE EDUCATION HERE AND THEN SEE WHAT HAPPENS; (B) THIRD GROUP ARE THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE SEKPTICAL LAIS IS "JUST ANOTHER LIST" AND WILL WAIT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY ON APPROVAL LISTS. HE THINKS IF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED APPROVALS IN RECENT MONTHS ACTUALLY LEAVE, THIS PROBABLY WILL TRIGGER A SUBSTANTIAL NEW MOVEMENT OF EMIGRATION AMONG THOSE IN THE "WAIT AND SEE" CATEGORY. HE IS FRANK TO SAY HE HAS NO CLEAR IDEA JUST HOW LARGE THIS CATEGORY REALLY IS.

5. OUR NET IMPRESSION IS THAT WHATEVER THE TRUE REASON FOR THE SUBSTANTIAL CUTBACK IN THE EMIGRATION RATE TO ISRAEL (AND ELSEWHERE) DURING THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF 1975, ALL EVIDENCE INDICATES THE GOR IS NOW MAKING A SERIOUS EFFORT TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION. IT IS TURE THAT EMIGRATION FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 1975 REPRESENTS APPROXIMATELY A THIRD OF THE 1974 FLOW, BUT THE APRIL-MAY-JUNE APPROVAL FIGURES AND THE JUNE DEPARTURE FIGURES CONSTITUTE A SHARP UPWARD TREND. AMB COHEN ESTIMATES THERE IS A 2-3 MONTH TIME LAG BETWEEN GOR APPROVAL AND GOI VISAEING OF THE PASSPORT, AND ANOTHER 2-3 MONTH PERIOD AFTER VISAEING BEFORE THE AVERAGE EMIGRANT FULFILLS ALL THE PRE-DEPARTURE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS. IF THIS IS ACCURATE, WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO SEE A SUBSTANTIAL OUTWARD FLOW OF EMIGRANTS TO ISRAEL FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS. THE KEY, OF COURSE, TO A CONTINUED HIGH RATE OF OUTFLOW BEYOND THAT WILL BE BASED SOLELY ON THE RATE OF APPLICATIONS. WE DO NOT KNOW ANYONE HERE WHO IS WILLING TO MAKE ANYTHING BUT AN UNEDUCATED
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GUESS ABOUT THIS, AND MOST OF THE GUESSING IS THAT THE POOL IS PROBABLY CLOSE TO BEING DRAINED DOWN TO THE POINT WHERE WE CANNOT EXPECT A SUSTAINED HIGH RATE OF OUTFLOW.
BARNES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JEWS, DATA, EMIGRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BUCHAR03007
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750230-1220
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750784/aaaacwsl.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 BUCHAREST 2915, 75 BUCHAREST 2868
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUN 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <21 OCT 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSESSMENT OF EMIGRATION SITUATION TO ISRAEL
TAGS: PFOR, SREF, IS, RO, (ROSEN, RABBI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006